GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:4518
ANSWERED ON:22.04.2002
PLANT VARIETIES AND ANIMAL SPECIES
SURESH PASI;THAAWAR CHAND GEHLOT

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of plant varieties and animal species found in the country;

(b) the extent of plant varieties and animal species increased/decreased during the last three years;

(c) whether the said varieties and species have been got patented;

(d) if so, the number thereof; and

(e) the steps being taken by the Government to increase and improve the plant varieties and animal species?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI HUKUMDEO NARAYAN YADAV)

(a) About 45,364 of plants including 17,500 of higher plants, and 81,292 animal species have been taxonomically described from India. About 360 crop plant species are cultivated and about 130 breeds/varieties of farm animals and poultry are found in the country.

(b) There is no perceptible change in the plant or animal species during the last three years.

(c) Patenting of plant varieties and animal species is not provided by law in the country. For plant varieties, however, an Act, namely, Protection of Plant Varieties and Farmers` Rights Act, 2001 (53 of 2001) has been enacted, which shall be enforced after the Rules and Procedures are framed and passed by the legislative process.

(d) Not Applicable.

(e) Research efforts in both public and private sectors are going on to develop new and improved varieties of various plants and on conservation of plant species. During the last three years (1999-2000 to 2001- 02), the number of accessions of crop plants and their wild relatives increased from 1,88,699 to 2,27,904 in the gene bank at the National Bureau of Plant Genetic Resources, New Delhi.

Several projects on genetic improvement of indigenous animals through selective breeding are operating under different animal specific institutes. Also, the description of animal populations, their evaluation and sustainable utilization is being carried out through scientific surveys of the animal genetic resources by the National Bureau of Animal Genetic Resources, Lucknow.